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Regional vaccine site a reality

By Dalton Zbierski
Staff Writer

CHICOPEE – Four neighboring communities celebrated together on April 28, as a regional vaccination site began operating out of the Castle of Knights in Chicopee on Memorial Drive. The opening served as a tremendous accomplishment for all involved.

The clinic will administer state-allotted doses of the Moderna vaccine to residents from Chicopee, Granby, Holyoke and South Hadley and has the capacity to administer 800 shots a day.

After several weeks of discussions, the Department of Public Health approved the regional vaccination site at the Castle of Knights in late March.

Doses, however, were slow to follow. The operation remained uncertain until an opening date was announced in mid-April.

Weeks of waiting culminated in the April 28 opening, which drove Chicopee Health Director Lisa Sanders to tears.

“I’m so excited today. I’m used to being at this podium and telling you guys all the active cases we have, but it’s so good to finally tell you that we have vaccines in the city. It’s been so long, and I’m just so happy. Let’s fill up these slots and let’s just crush COVID,” said Sanders.

Chicopee Mayor John Vieau urged residents to get vaccinated and credited the first



Holyoke Community College nursing students Brittany Lord, Christine Briggs and Yamaira Bejesus came out to work the first day of the Chicopee regional vaccination clinic.



Alongside a mix of municipal and state officials, Chicopee Mayor John Vieau offers a round of applause for the healthcare workers and first responders, who are manning Chicopee’s regional vaccination site.

responders and medical professionals, who make the clinic possible.

Referencing the rising availability of COVID-19 testing and vaccines, Vieau expressed his belief that the state is making strong progress. Last Thursday, he emphasized the magnitude of the clinic’s opening.

“I have some scripted things that I’m not going to use; it’s not about being script-

ed today. It’s about getting the message out there. We’ve made vaccines available, and that was our goal,” said Vieau.

A number of speakers took to the podium at the Castle of the Knights on April 28. Among them was Hampden County Sheriff Nick Cocchi, who praised all involved in manning the clinic.

“The heroes that are in this room today are not behind the podium. They’re out in front



Holyoke Community College nursing students Shauna Martinez, Matthew Tetreault, Veronica Machuca, Edward Brewer prepare for the first day of the regional vaccination clinic that is operating at the Castle of Knights in Chicopee.

of the podium. I want to thank each and every one of you for stepping up and doing the work that you do,” said Cocchi.

Cocchi acknowledged that vaccinations are controversial. Nonetheless, he encouraged residents to book an appointment, even if only for peace of mind.

“One vaccine at a time will allow us to open up this Commonwealth and, then, that person, that family or that individual can feel confident about moving forward and doing so in a very safe and productive way,”

said Cocchi.

Interim Holyoke Mayor Terence Murphy took to the microphone as well, thanking the students from Holyoke Community College’s nursing program, who are working the clinic. Murphy also delivered an important message to employers throughout the region.

“Without mandating, I would like to challenge employers to give your employees, especially those that are on low

See VACCINE, page 9

Return to school, in-person graduation scheduled

By Shelby Macri
smacri@Turley.com

HOLYOKE – This year’s graduating class has a lot to look forward to in the upcoming month as graduation ceremonies roll around in June.

The Holyoke Public Schools has started announcing information on graduation ceremonies, senior activities, and other important information for the end of the academic year.

Additionally, they’ve announced when students will be returning to in-person classes for each school.

For Holyoke High School North Campus; each grade will return for one day before going fully remote at the end of next week. Starting Monday, May 10 students will be re-introduced to

in-person schooling by grade. Next Monday, seniors will be in person while grades nine through 11 are remote, Tuesday, juniors will be in person with grades 9, 10, and 12 being remote, Wednesday, sophomores will return and grades 9, 11, and 12 are remote, Thursday, freshmen are in-person and grades 10 through 12 are remote. On Friday, May 14, all grades will be either in-person or fully remote as the year finishes.

For Holyoke High School Dean Campus, all grades will return to in-person schooling or be fully remote starting Monday, May 17. Students will continue with the current hybrid schedule until Friday, May 14, and the Dean Campus

See SCHOOL, page 9

TEACHERS GET VACCINATED



The vaccine clinic for the teachers in the Holyoke Public Schools takes place recently. For many, it was their second shot.

Submitted photo

Senate moves Soldiers’ Home bill forward

HOLYOKE – On Thursday, Apr. 29, the Massachusetts State Senate unanimously voted to pass a bill authorizing \$400 million in bonds for the design and construction of a new facility for the soldiers’ home in Holyoke. It also authorizes the issuance of \$200 million in general obligation bonds to increase geographic equity and accessibility related to the continuum of long-term care services for those Massachusetts veterans not primarily served by the soldiers’ homes in Chelsea or Holyoke.

“Massachusetts has always been a leader for Veteran services, and this bill reflects the Senate’s deep commitment to those who have served our nation,” stated Senator John

See SOLDIERS, page 9

IN-PERSON ART



In-person Holyoke elementary school students show off their recent artwork. Students have been phased back in to in-person learning in the last few weeks.
 Submitted photo

Water main project beginning soon in Highlands area

HOLYOKE – Residents are advised that work will begin soon on a Holyoke Water Works water main replacement project in the Highlands area of Holyoke. Work will take place in Fairfield, Morgan, Pearl, and Nonotuck Streets, along with Loomis Avenue and small segments of Pleasant and Northampton Streets. Construction is expected to continue into this fall with final completion and pavement restoration next spring. In preparation for the water main improvements, crews working for Holyoke Gas & Electric have already started work on a new gas main on Pearl Street and will shift to Morgan Street when this work is complete in about 4 weeks.

This much-needed project has been contracted to Caracas Construction and is funded by the State Revolving Fund Program administered by

the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection. The project is designed to improve fire protection and water quality for the residents in these areas and demonstrates the city’s commitment to upgrading the water system infrastructure through this multi-phase project implemented over the next few years in a number of areas across the city.

Please expect traffic delays and detours while this work is ongoing. Holyoke Water Works and Holyoke Gas & Electric will make every effort to provide advance notification to residents in specific work areas that may see their service impacted by this project.

Holyoke Water Works can be reached at (413) 536-0442 if you have any questions regarding the water main replacement portion of the project.

Holyoke Public Schools to celebrate National School Nurse Week

HOLYOKE – National School Nurse Week is May 6 to 12 and School Nurse day is May 12, a date set aside to recognize the integral role that school nurses play bridging health and education to improve each child’s cognitive, physical, social and emotional development, regardless of whether they are physically present in school or not.

School nurses serve as a critical health hub for students, ensuring that students are ready for learning by managing complex chronic conditions; identifying and addressing mental health issues; leveling the field on health disparities and promoting healthy behaviors; enrolling children in health insurance and connecting families to healthcare providers; han-

dling medical emergencies... and now, navigating through the COVID-19 pandemic through actions such as COVID-teaching, testing, tracking and vaccination clinics for students and school personnel.

School nurses champion the whole student every day of the year. But, on National School Nurse Day, we take special time to celebrate and recognize the contributions that our Holyoke Public Schools’ nurses are making to the health and learning of our students. Healthy

children learn better, and school nurses make that happen.

The Holyoke Public Schools appreciate all their hard work in keeping our students and staff safe and let them know just how lucky we feel to have them in their schools. Join HPS in celebrating them during this special week by sending us a shout out for us to share on their district social media accounts by emailing a note of thanks to social@hps.holyoke.ma.us.



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Baystate Health announces changes in visitor policy

SPRINGFIELD – As more people in the community are being vaccinated, Baystate Health is updating its visitor policy guidelines for each tier and beginning May 3 will open to visitation in the inpatient units and Emergency Departments at all Baystate hospitals.

“Visitors—loved ones and others—are known to have significant benefits to the healing and recovery processes of hospitalized patients. We have been longing for the day when we could safely re-introduce visitors to the Baystate

Health hospital environment and have now reached a point where this is possible,” said Dr. Andrew W. Artenstein, chief physician executive and chief academic officer, Baystate Health.

All Baystate Hospitals are now in the yellow tier - including Baystate Medical Center and Baystate Children’s Hospital in Springfield, Baystate Franklin Medical Center in Greenfield, Baystate Noble Hospital in Westfield, and Baystate Wing Hospital in Palmer – allowing for:

- One visitor at a time for patients

who are not in the ICU

- Two visitors at a time for patients in the ICU
- Two parents or guardians at a time for pediatric patients.

In addition, visiting hours have been extended from noon to 8 p.m.

All visitors must adhere to Baystate Health infection control practices that are in effect throughout the health system: wearing facemasks, frequent handwashing, maintain physical/social distance of 6 feet as possible, and no

shared food sources.

Red, yellow, green and gray tiers (also called zones) still remain for visitation based on the CDC, DPH and state guidelines, but the policy details within the tiers will change.

Baystate Health will continue to review the county data and CDC/DPH/State guidelines weekly to determine which tier each county will be in. To stay up to date and see exceptions for each tier, go to baystatehealth.org/patients/visiting.

MacDuffie responds to community need for summer program

GRANBY – The MacDuffie School is excited to announce that it has opened registration for the 2021 summer camp season. After weeks of receiving inquiries from the community about the need for summer programming, MacDuffie has reinstated its summer program to serve the needs of local families as they navigate the COVID-19 pandemic.

“We know that the community continues to struggle to manage complicated schedules during the pandemic,” said Steve Griffin, MacDuffie’s head of school. “We also know the developmental value of interpersonal interaction for kids of all ages. Given the success we have had being open in person this school year, we want to reopen our camp program to support the town of Granby, and families in all the surrounding communities that we serve.”

The MacDuffie School will be offering a coeducational, full-day summer program for students entering grades 1 to 8. The program will be offered in six, one-week sessions starting Monday, June 28, to be held on the beautiful, 250-acre MacDuffie School campus in Granby. To further accommodate busy schedules, the program will also offer before and

aftercare. Camp runs from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m.; before-care begins at 7:30 a.m. and runs until the beginning of regular camp programming, and after-care runs from the end of day camp until 5 p.m.

Participants will participate in programs including coding, creative writing, culinary arts, dance, drama, land sports, outdoor adventures, science, and visual arts, enjoy lunch prepared by the trained chefs on staff at MacDuffie’s own SAGE Dining Services, and finish the afternoon with a variety of afternoon activities and field trips.

The MacDuffie School is a boarding and day school for boys and girls in grades 6 to 12. The MacDuffie School has been an active participant in the Pioneer Valley community for 131 years, the last 10 of those years in Granby.

“Our program leaders are passionate and experienced,” said Tina Hamel, Summer Programs Coordinator and Science Department Chair. “and we all look forward to creating a fun and supportive environment for your child to thrive this summer!”

For more information please visit summer.macduffie.org, or contact Ms. Hamel at Summer@MacDuffie.org.

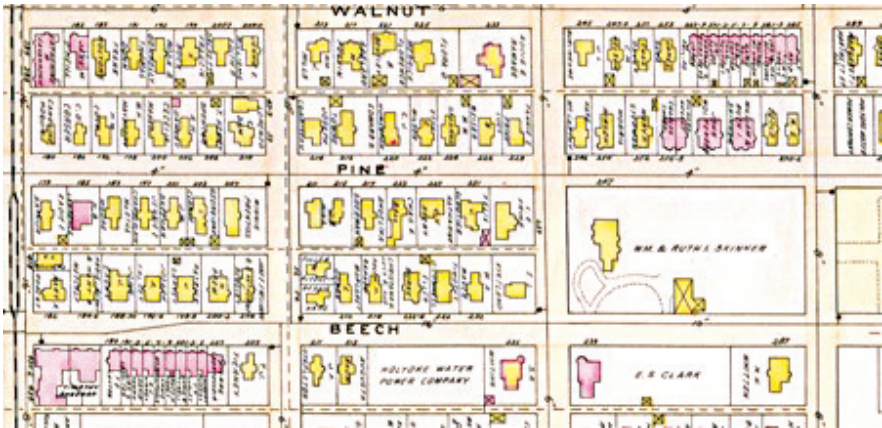
Sara Campbell to give virtual lecture on historic maps

HOLYOKE – On Wednesday, May 19, at 4 p.m. Sara Campbell will give a virtual talk on researching historic maps.

For the family researcher, learning about the places our ancestors lived helps put their lives in perspective. This talk helps us understand the history of map-making, categories of maps that can be used, and where to look for maps relevant to one’s research. Correlating maps with other records of the time period helps us find details that might not have been uncovered otherwise.

Select local and regional maps will be used to illustrate the information historic maps can and cannot provide.

About the speaker: Sara Campbell is a professional engineer with a passion for genealogy research that began when she dove into her own family history in 1990. An experienced lecturer, educator, author, and editor, she speaks to library groups and societies around the region. Her two talks for the Holyoke History Room (May 19 and June 9) draw on Sara’s knowledge of local land records.



The Big E hosting virtual farmers market designed for Mother’s Day

WEST SPRINGFIELD – The Farmers Market at Eastern States Exposition will feature everything from charcuterie boards to jewelry in a virtual shopping experience specially designed for Mother’s Day.

This virtual iteration of The Big E’s Farmers Market will present special and unique items including wine accessories, handmade Big E bracelets, cosmetic bags and purses and offi-

cial Eastern States Exposition/West Springfield Tartan products.

Now that state guidelines are easing, plan your party games for adults with the roulette wheel of shot glasses, shot glass chess, the alcohol squirt gun and the “Chambong,” the ultimate shooter that allows the rapid and enhanced experience of sparkling wine or champagne consumption.

For the wine lover, the Farmers

Market offers hand-painted wine glasses and whimsical wine bottle and cork holders.

Products for the crafter include looms and weaving kits, and the cheese lover will be pleased with a variety of cheese boards, fondue sets and ceramic brie bakers. If you love the outdoors and drive-in movies, check out the scarves and blankets.

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of-a-kind gifts is sure to please that special Mom in your life.

Shop today at <https://farmersmarket.thebig.com/p/farmers-market> to be sure you’ll have your gifts in-hand for Mom’s special day.

Items can be picked up curbside at the Farmers Market from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday to Friday, or shipped to your mailing address if ordered before May 5.

Fireworks display called off for July 4

SPRINGFIELD – For the second year, the Spirit of Springfield will not be hosting Independence Day festivities on July 4. The decision was made after learning of Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker’s updated COVID-19 plans for the state’s continued reopening.

“Although fairs and festivals can have 50% capacity, the Spirit of Springfield is not able to control the number of people gathering for July 4th festivities since they are free and open to the public,” stated Spirit of Springfield President Judy Matt. “We are optimistic that there will fireworks in Springfield before the end of 2021.”

Mayor Domenic J. Sarno stated, “The City of Springfield continues to be prudent in our decisions on how we approach our reopening aspects. Once we defeat this COVID-19 Coronavirus pandemic, and we will, we will be able to celebrate together once again with the Spirit of Springfield. Until then

and out of an abundance of caution, we must continue to be proactive and vigilant.”

“The health and well-being of our community is of utmost importance,” said Dennis Duquette, head of Community Responsibility, MassMutual, and president of the MassMutual Foundation. “We fully support this decision and look forward to celebrating with a terrific fireworks display when the time is right.”

Star Spangled Springfield has been a celebration of the country’s independence and a July 4th tradition since 1991. It has featured musical entertainment, family-friendly activities, and world-class pyrotechnics by Fireworks by Grucci. MassMutual has been the lead sponsor since 2006 with additional support from area businesses.

For updates, follow Spirit of Springfield on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, and visit spiritofspringfield.org.

NAMI holding virtual Walk-a-thon

AGAWAM – The National Alliance on Mental Illness of Western Massachusetts will be holding its 21st Annual Virtual Walk-a-thon, ‘A Journey of Hope and Recovery’ on May 23 beginning at 11 a.m.

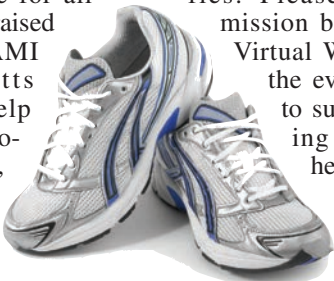
The event is suitable for all ages and abilities. Funds raised will directly benefit NAMI Western Massachusetts continuing efforts to help increase awareness and provide essential education, advocacy and support group programs for the people in our community living with mental health conditions and their loved ones.

NAMI is the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the nation’s largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to Building Better Lives for all those affected by mental illness. NAMI provides advocacy, education, support and public awareness so that

all individuals and families affected by mental illness can Build Better Lives.

Join us and have a fun time while supporting a great cause. Among the festivities will be guest speakers, arts, activities, peer videos, music and raffles. Please help NAMI-WM’s mission by participating in this Virtual Walk or by sponsoring the event. If you would like to submit a brief video saying how NAMI-WM has helped you or a loved one or how you maintain good mental health during these difficult times, these would be most appreciated. Two minutes or less, deadline May 8, email through <https://transfer.pcloud.com> to information@namiwm.org.

For further information please contact our office at 413-786-9139 or visit us at www.namiwm.org/events for entry and sponsorship forms.



Poetry Corner

My Friend

by Thomas J. Kennedy

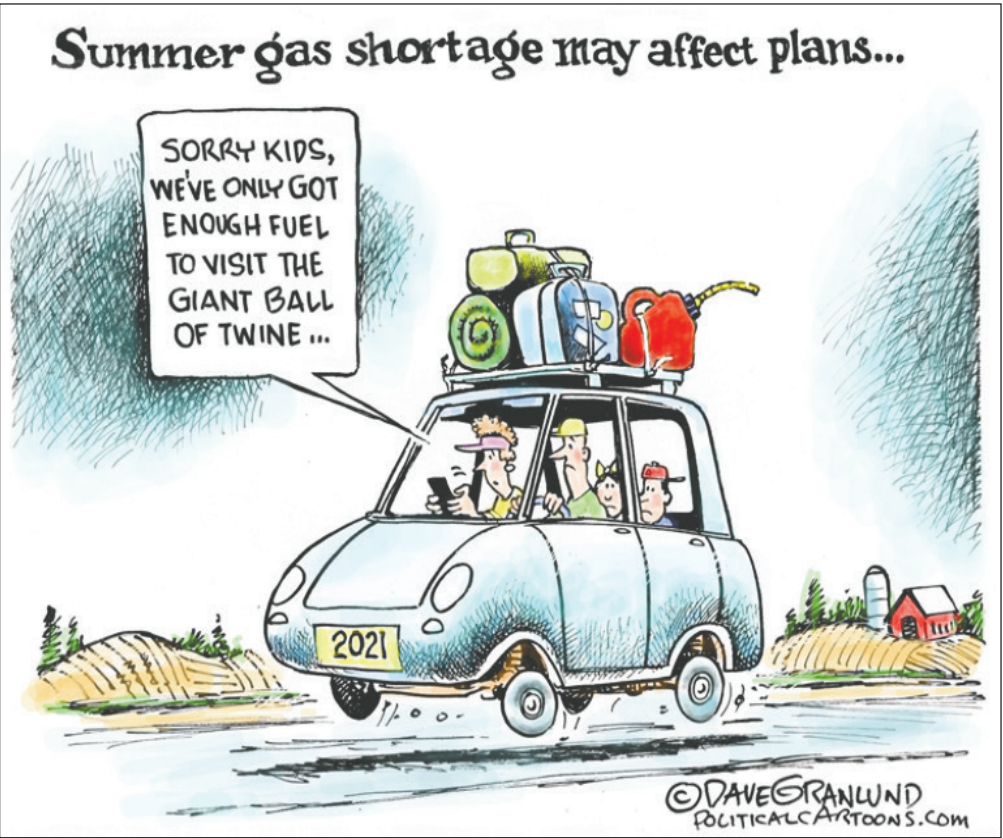
What would I do without you?
He said you made me so happy!
It's so hard to find a joy filled person today.
As all one could do is love and pray.

I need him who always has a smile,
Makes me happy for more than awhile.
He's so honest, loving everyone and free.
Oh how I wish I could be he — So giving
Unselfish first.

But He never gets angry with me,
And I cannot make him get angry.
He is my friend, and I need him so
Please God... Never let him go.

Peace, Love and Joy — Never long ago.
Tommy said:

Walter, honest genuine person I see,
A man of deep devoted spirituality.
He deserves the best pill Eternity.



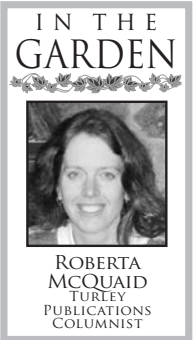
Guest Column

The Garden Lady takes on various pests

Elaine, who gardens in Ware, wrote in with this question for the Garden Lady: “I have a problem with grubs and moles. In your article you said beer is effective on grubs. Would you please explain how to do this. My whole yard and vegetable garden is infested. Last year I found out my vegetables had grubs and mole tunnels. Do you have any suggestions on how to deal with moles also?”

Thanks for your question. Beer is an effective bait for slugs, but I have never heard of it used on grubs. Last year we had lots of rain, right around the time that my strawberries were turning red. Nothing is more disturbing than picking a strawberry and finding a slug burrowed inside! I set stale beer in a saucer, level with the surface of the soil. The slugs were lured in and drowned. I cleaned and refreshed the saucer every two or three days depending on how many slugs were there. Handpicking slugs also works well. Typically they feed in the early morning hours, so I would go out just after sunrise and drop the buggers into a yogurt container filled with soapy water. Other folks put down boards in the garden (they like to hide there) or use cantaloupe rinds face down where they’ll also congregate. Many can be disposed of easily and without too much yuck-factor.

As far as grubs go, I’ll recommend Milky



Spore powder, a bacterium that the Japanese grub will ingest as it feeds in the lawn. The bacteria reproduce inside the grub’s gut and usually kill it in a week or two. As the grub decomposes it will release even more bacteria, thereby killing even more grubs. So on and so forth. It may take a few years for populations of grubs to decrease but once in the soil the bacteria will last for years. Apply when the soil temperature reaches 65 degrees or more, during a period of active feeding in summer or early fall. Since grubs are a food source for moles, fewer grubs will likely cut down on mole populations as well. Less grubs may also mean fewer holes in the lawn from skunks who are looking for dinner. Milky Spore is registered with the EPA and is reported safe for people, pets, wildlife, beneficials and the like. I hope this advice helps!

Walter is a home orchardist and also has a question about pests. “I have pears, apples, plums and nectarine trees. How can I keep raccoons, possums, squirrels and skunks away from my fruit trees? When the trees mature, they raid the trees and take bites out of the apples and other fruit, and then leave the fruits on the ground with one or two bites in the fruits. Any advice would be truly appreciated.

How frustrating to wait for your fruit to mature, only to have it eaten. I consulted my

favorite orchardist, Michael Phillips, by way of his book, “The Holistic Orchard,” to get some answers for you in terms of these pests and birds which might also be causing some of the havoc. One idea I thought that sounded interesting is blocking access to the trunk so that the animals can’t climb up. Wrapping the trunk in aluminum roof flashing up to four feet is reportedly enough to deter raccoons and squirrels. Spreading some gooey tangle trap on plastic just above the flashing doubles the punch. Squirrels can jump from tree, though, but reportedly like a quick get away, and steer away from areas with tall vegetation (news to me!!) so perhaps letting the grass grow up a bit near harvest may help.

As far as deterrents go, I am wondering about those fake owls that you often see at pick-your-own orchards. It may be worth a shot to install one of those. The same would go for the big scare-eye balloons. Usually with these type of deterrents, it’s critical to move them often so that they don’t merely become part of the scenery, but actually scare the pest away: think predator/prey.

Hanging artificial fruit prior to harvest to the point that the culprit bird gets sick of trying to peck something inedible may also be worth a try. Some people even leave them up all year long! And when in doubt, I always try predator urine. Back in the days of having infants in my

See GARDEN, page 5

History Matters: May 1 to May 15

History Matters is a biweekly feature courtesy of The Grateful American Book Prize, which is given to children’s books that emphasize the importance of American history.

By John Grimaldi and David Bruce Smith

On May 5, 1961, Navy Commander Alan Bartlett Shepard Jr. became the first American in space. It was just a 15-minute mission, memorable to the nation, but too late to outwit the competition. Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin astounded the world when he orbited the earth, once, in the Vistok 1.

Shepard’s Freedom 7 capsule, however, foreshadowed America’s dominance; less than a decade later, the Apollo 11 mission “silenced” the Russians, and catapulted Neil Armstrong, Edwin “Buzz” Aldrin, and Michael Collins to the moon.

Shepard was ranked fifth to walk the lunar surface after the Apollo 14 mission.

The Grateful American Book Prize recommends “Light This Candle: The Life and Times of Alan Shepard,” by Neal Thompson.

Transcontinental railroads

The American Revolution was an unexpected victory for the colonists. They won an immense land with a myriad of perks and perils, but the only way to traverse its complex vastness was to join a wagon train. It was a complicated and difficult crossing that many did not survive.

Then, on May 10, 1869, everything changed; two railroads completed the task of laying the tracks from “sea to shining sea.” The presidents of the Union Pacific and Central Pacific railroads met at Promontory, Utah to drive the last spike into the rails of the nation’s first transcontinental railway.

Seven years earlier, land grants and loans from Congress had equipped them with the fiscal flexibility to build, but according to History.com, “In their eagerness for land, the two lines built right past each other, and the final meeting place had to be renegotiated.”

To learn more about how the West was subdued, the Grateful American Book Prize recommends “Full Steam Ahead: The Race to Build a Transcontinental Railroad,” by Rhoda Blumberg.

Lewis and Clark

In order to determine what it would require to mollify a newly acquired, undomesticated expanse of land, President Jefferson determined that a survey was imperative; he selected two explorers, Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, to manage the mission.

America was just over 21-years-old, but the Louisiana Purchase transaction suddenly added 828,000 acres, and the equivalent of approximately 15 states.

Lewis and Clark started their journey in St. Louis with 55 men on May 14, 1804.

According to History.com, “The expedition traveled up the Missouri River in a 55-foot-long keelboat and two smaller boats. In November, Toussaint Charbonneau, a French-Canadian fur trader accompanied by his young Native American wife, Sacagawea, joined the expedition as an interpreter. The group wintered in present-day North Dakota before crossing into present-day Montana, where they first saw the Rocky Mountains.

They met up with the Shoshone Indians when they reached Colorado, crossed the

See HISTORY, page 5



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PATRICK H. TURLEY
CEO

KEITH TURLEY
President

INTERIM EDITOR
Greg Scibelli
thesun@turley.com

STAFF WRITER
Peter Spotts
pspotts@turley.com

ADVERTISING SALES
Wendy Delcamp
wdelcamp@turley.com

SPORTS EDITOR
Greg Scibelli
sports@turley.com

SOCIAL MEDIA



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A Quote

OF NOTE

“Life doesn’t
come with
a manual.
It comes with
a mother.”

Anonymous

Letters to the Editor Policy

Letters to the Editor have a maximum of 350 words. We require writers to include their name, address and phone number in order for our office to authenticate authorship prior to publication. Addresses and phone numbers are not published.

Unsigned or anonymous letters will NOT be published.

We reserve the right to edit or withhold any submissions. Libelous, unsubstantiated allegations, personal attacks or defamation of character are not allowed.

Deadline for submissions is Wednesday at noon.

Please email (preferred) letters to thesun@turley.com. Mailed letters can be sent to The Sun, 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069.

Students present COVID-19 research at statewide conference

SPRINGFIELD – More than 60 Springfield Technical Community College students on April 23 joined the Massachusetts Undergraduate Research Conference (MassURC), which united more than 900 undergraduate students from colleges and universities within the Commonwealth.

Students from STCC’s STEM Starter Academy presented 31 research posters. The team that won at STCC’s Sustainathon Research competition earlier in the spring worked on a project titled “COVID-19 Impacts on the Environment.”

The annual conference, held virtually this year, provided a platform for students to engage in research under the guidance of their professor, to showcase their research findings and share innovative ideas to a wide audience.

Three STCC students who were part of the UMass conference said they were excited to present on their topic and learn from other college students.

“It was a rigorous process,” said

Reena Randhir, director of the STEM Starter Academy at STCC. “It took them more than 10 weeks to prepare. They learned the process of scientific research, critical thinking, teamwork and oral presentation.”

The students, Miranda Kamukala, Sandra Pradhan and Jonathan Pilat, were part of a team of five students who won the research poster competition during the STCC Virtual Sustainathon on April 14. The research project was created as part of their class project in Human Anatomy and Physiology.

“We researched how air pollution was affected by the pandemic,” said Pilat, of East Longmeadow. “There was less pollution because people weren’t getting out that much. There was less smoke because factories were closed.”

They also examined the impact of COVID-19 on public health. They reported on hospitalization trends related to infections. Their research also explored vaccines approved for use in

the United States.

“I was very impressed with their teamwork,” Randhir said. “Most of them had jobs, but they prioritized their Wednesday Zoom meets. They were awesome collaborators, which led to successful completion of the research. The fun part was the practice for the oral presentation, which included a lot of laughter and learning.”

Kamukala, of Agawam, said working virtually on Zoom was challenging, but the team found a way to make it work. “The most important thing was we all put effort into it,” said Kamukala. “We all scheduled a time that was good for everyone.”

She added, “This experience has been amazing. During this pandemic when students are isolated and most work is done as an individual, it was great to meet my classmates and discuss this project.”

Pradhan, of Springfield, said the team experience helped her develop her public speaking skills. “When I started, I

was afraid to talk, but with practice I feel comfortable speaking to a group. I have learned so much and gained confidence in myself.”

Some of the main findings were that air, water, and greenhouse gas pollution improved while waste from personal protective equipment worsened. Data indicated that mitigation through masks and physical distancing reduced the spread of the disease. In addition, vaccine development and administration is a major innovative strategy against the pandemic.

Uncertainties remain on variants, a new surge in cases, and a future uptick of the virus. The students found that reducing the impact of COVID-19 on poor and vulnerable populations remains a critical need.

The STCC students who presented at MassURC also represented other programs on campus including the Honors Program and the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) division.

GARDEN, from page 4

household, you would often see a diaper hanging in an onion bag in my orchard to keep animal thugs out. I guess creativity comes into play. Good luck.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at

the University of Massachusetts. For the last 28 years, she has held the position of staff horticulturalist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to ekennedy@turley.com with “Gardening Question” in the subject line.

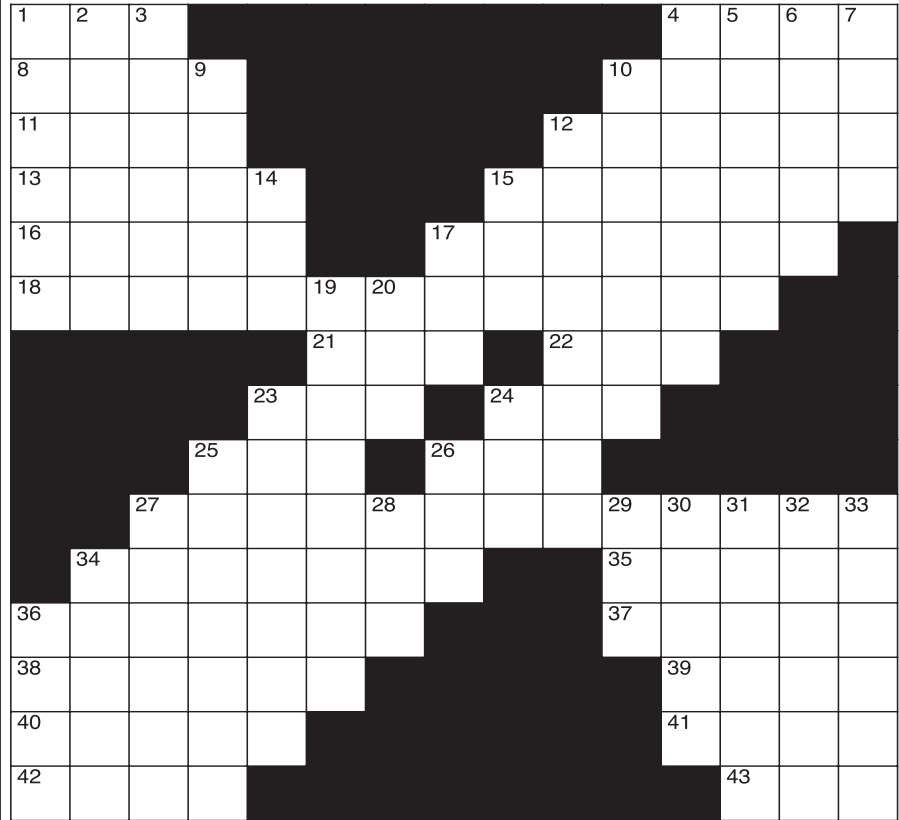
HISTORY, from page 4

Clearwater and Snake rivers in canoes, and followed the Columbia River to the Pacific Ocean on Nov. 8, 1805.

Two and a half years later, the expedition returned, in triumph, to St. Louis with 33 men. They had mapped out new

lands and brought back journals about the Indian tribes they encountered; scientific notes of the flora and fauna they encountered, and a claim to the Oregon Territory.

For more information, the Grateful American Book Prize recommends “Sacajawea,” by Joseph Bruchac.



- CLUES ACROSS**

 - 1. Engine additive
 - 4. A hearty laugh
 - 8. Restrain
 - 10. Dried coconut kernels
 - 11. Nefarious
 - 12. Elderly
 - 13. Central part of a church building
 - 15. Throw into confusion
 - 16. Intestinal
 - 17. Qualities of being religious
 - 18. Live up to a standard
 - 21. Seize
 - 22. Go quickly
 - 23. Automated teller machine
 - 24. Bowling necessity
 - 25. One point east
- of due south

 - 26. Japanese honorific
 - 27. A way to induce sleep
 - 34. Makes cash register rolls
 - 35. A city in S Louisiana
 - 36. Make more cheerful
 - 37. Manicurist
 - 38. Consents
 - 39. Network of nerves
 - 40. Mocking smile
 - 41. It covers the body
 - 42. Partner to pans
 - 43. Perform in a play
- CLUES DOWN**

 - 1. Beautiful
- 2. Polynesian island country
 - 3. Shrub of the olive family
 - 4. Self-governing Netherlands territory
 - 5. Shared one’s view
 - 6. Tailless amphibians
 - 7. Charge passengers must pay
 - 9. Sound sheep make
 - 10. Known for sure
 - 12. Filled with unexpressed anger
 - 14. Student (abbr.)
 - 15. Criticize
 - 17. Gathering place
 - 19. Informal alliances
 - 20. One’s mother (British)
 - 23. Landholder
 - 24. Peter’s last name
 - 25. Parties
 - 26. Title of respect
 - 27. Red wine
 - 28. Pearl Jam’s debut
 - 29. Shaft horsepower (abbr.)
 - 30. Frosts
 - 31. Cry of joy
 - 32. Induces vomiting
 - 33. Mother or father
 - 34. Dal __: Musical navigation marker
 - 36. Door fastener part

CROSSWORD ANSWER on page 6

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Centennial celebration: Seyffer turns 100

By Dalton Zbierski
Staff Writer

SOUTH HADLEY – A centennial birthday celebration took place at the Loomis Village Retirement Community in South Hadley last Friday. On April 27, Loomis Village resident Kenneth Seyffer turned 100-years-old, and a small party on April 30 marked the occasion.

“It means a lot at my age, as you can imagine,” said Seyffer, who lived in Holyoke for 40 years. “The interesting thing is I go to three doctors once or twice a year, and all three say, ‘You’re the oldest patient we have,’ and I keep saying, ‘I don’t believe it.’”

Seyffer has four daughters, nine grandchildren and 14 great grandchildren, all of whom are the lucky recipients of his wisdom.

“Success is all in your mind,” said Seyffer. “Do the best you can, hang in there and talk to people all the time because you never know enough. You need knowledge.”

A former business owner and Senior Vice President at Shawmut First Bank, Seyffer has resided at Loomis Village for the past 19 years.

As a military man during WWII, Seyffer served a nine-month combat tour as part of Gen. George S. Patton’s 3rd U.S. Army in the European Theater

of Operations.

“I don’t like to talk about that much. I learned a lot about people. I was with people from the South, who probably didn’t get out of high school, and we all got together. I learned a lot there. I don’t want to see that happen again,” said Seyffer.

For the past century, Seyffer has dedicated his life to attaining further knowledge. He believes that pursuit may be a primary reason he remains alive.

“I think that might be part of my staying around because I read books about these guys that start with nothing and make a lot of money. But in between, there’s ups and downs automatically. Life is full of that. You have to get used to it,” said Seyffer, who also has enjoyed a dry martini each evening for the past 65 years.

Seyffer encourages young adults to pursue a career path that they enjoy. Maintaining a strong work ethic is a priority, as is being persistent.

“If you get that job, work your tail off. Nothing comes easy,” said Seyffer. “I’ve found that these days, there’s too many people saying, ‘Well, maybe the government will take care of it.’ It’s got to be you personally thinking positively and, then, doing that extra work; that extra 10% will make you successful.”

Seyffer was joined by his daughter Kathy Opdycke at last Friday’s birth-

day celebration. Opdycke traveled from Richmond, VA to visit Seyffer and brought a hand-crafted replica of a noteworthy building on the Loomis Village campus.

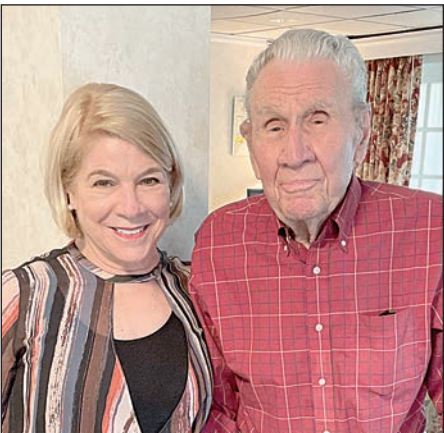
“Instead of giving him another L.L. Bean flannel shirt, I chose to create the historic farmhouse, which is the icon of the Loomis campus. It has such historical value; it was once a Christmas tree farm,” said Opdycke, who spent six months creating the replica, which includes 24 LED lights.

Opdycke was thrilled to present the gift to Seyffer. She struggled to put into words how proud she is of her father.

“My father is amazing. I’m inspired by him every single day,” said Opdycke. “We get up each morning at seven o’clock, and there are emails to 10 of us, the children and friends, with words of the day. Some are philosophical, and others are humorous. That he gets up every day and does that, he is a complete inspiration to me.”

Over the course of 100 years, Seyffer has lived a full life. To the residents of western Massachusetts, he offered a final tidbit of advice.

“I know people have a lot to say and only wish more people would have something to say because you usually only hear from a small group. This country should get together more,” said Seyffer.



Kathy Opdycke traveled from Virginia to visit her father Kenneth Seyffer, days after his 100th birthday.



To celebrate her father's centennial birthday, Kathy Opdycke crafted a replica of the Loomis Village farmhouse.

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Spring sports return



After no action at all last year, Holyoke spring sports began last week. Teams were in full practice mode with a quick turnaround to games beginning this week. The spring season will be played until the end of June. Left, Angelica Rivera sends a throw back to the infield. Center, Desirae Darkwah makes a catch on a fly ball. Right, Jaycalee makes a long throw during practice earlier this week.

Photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

Tri-County legend Oliveira passes away

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

PALMER – With just a month to go before the season is set to begin, the Tri-County Baseball League, and the region at-large are mourning the loss of a league legend, as well as a Western Massachusetts Baseball Hall of Famer.

Karl Oliveira, who played in the Tri-County League for almost 40 years, passed away at the age of 57. When news of his passing began circulating last Monday, April 26, it was a shockwave throughout the

entire Western Massachusetts baseball community, including his own team, and even his competition.

Oliveira's legacy in the Tri-County League began when he was just 17-years-old. He made the Fenton's of Amherst roster. He moved around the league for 10 years before coming to agreement for the St. Joseph's Club to sponsor a Tri-County team, and St. Joseph was once again a part of the league after leaving it for nearly 20 years. Oliveira served as a player-manager for the team and became an active participant in the

league's leadership, serving as the league's secretary for many years.

St. Joseph's has been a mainstay in the league since that time. Oliveira enjoyed the competition of the league as well as participating in other baseball in the region, including the Full Count League, which was eventually absorbed by Tri-County.

Following news of his passing, social media was flooded with comments from his teammates to his competition, one of them even calling Oliveira the "Godfather of Western Mass. Baseball."

Oliveira's legendary status was confirmed just two years ago when he was inducted into the Western Mass. Baseball Hall of Fame.

While Oliveira at times had taken on a more reserve role, he still continued to actively play in games at the age of 55. He would often play first base or serve as a designated hitter for St. Joe's, continuing to play under the lights at the old field in Thorndike. He was set to participate in the 2021 season prior to his passing. Like many, the pandemic cancelled his 2020 season and he was itching to get back on the field.

"This is sad news," said

See OLIVEIRA, page 8



Karl Oliveira, a Western Mass. Baseball Hall of Famer and longtime player-manager for St. Joe's of the Tri-County League, passed away last week at the age of 57.

Photo by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

MIAA approves modified rules for wrestling

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

REGION – Though it came down to the last minute, the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association has approved modifications for high school wrestling that will allow for competition to take place during the spring season.

Last Friday, the MIAA Board of Directors held a special meeting to approve modifications to the sport after the Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs officially cleared wrestling for Level 3 competition. Level 3 competition allows dual meets to take place.

Wrestling is normally a winter sport, so participation will ultimately be up to the individual schools. Some may or may not be participating due to numbers, especially with multiple sports going in the spring such as baseball, lacrosse, and track.

Like all other high school sports, the MIAA is requiring wrestlers to wear face masks to participate. Wrestling is one of the most close contact sports that is

offered for high schoolers, and officials deferred allowing the sport to take place in the last possible high school season in order to allow the vaccination effort to gain traction.

Among the highlighted rules for high school wrestling, masks are not only required for the participants, but all those involved, including coaches, facility personnel, and officials. Spectators will also likely be allowed in a limited capacity with indoor gathering numbers of the increase beginning on May 10.

While many wrestlers are used to participating in large tournaments on the weekend, that will not be the case. There also will not be any dual meet tournaments. Only team versus team duals meets are allowed during the spring season, and at the most, three teams are allowed to participate in a given event.

Weigh-ins are a big part of the sport. The MIAA is encouraging each school to hold morning weigh-ins with no additional weigh-ins prior

See WRESTLING, page 8

Rameau takes win in Monadnock season opener

WINCHESTER, N.H. – Sam Rameau dominated early, restarted deep in the field after a pit stop, drove to the front, made a pass for the lead, and rolled to Victory Lane. The Westminster, Massachusetts, native, and driver for Rameau Family Motorsports, was victorious in the season-opener for the Tri Track Open Modified Series presented by All Phases Renovations at Monadnock Speedway on Saturday, May 1.

In the Wonder Casino 100, Rameau made a late pass on Ron Silk to score the \$6,000 winning check — besting more than 30 cars that showed up to the Winchester, New Hampshire oval. Silk crossed the line second, with defending series champion Matt Hirschman third.

Rameau pitted from the lead, along with the rest of the field, during a caution period just after halfway. He restarted outside the top-15 and his chances of winning at that point appeared slim. But the rising Modified talent worked his way to the front.

“I was just going at my own pace early, and we came in and I’m not going to lie, I was really nervous over

the radio,” Rameau said. “With 40 laps to go, I said there was no way we were winning the race. The car just rolled the outside great. We all come here for the same reason. It’s really cool. I just really can’t thank my guys enough. They do a great job.”

Two-time NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour champion Justin Bonsignore and Les Hinckley finished the top-five. Ben Byrne was sixth, followed by Woody Pitkat, Anthony Nocella, NASCAR Cup Series driver Ryan Preece and Joey Cipriano III.

Devin O’Connell advanced the most positions during the race, scoring the Green Construction, LLC Hard Charger award, worth \$500. Earlier in the day, Justin Bonsignore, Woody Pitkat, Earl Paules and Ben Byrne won heat races, scoring \$300 each courtesy of Pepsi and the Pepsi Challenge. Anthony Sesely and Brian Robie also scored \$300 each from Pepsi with consi race wins.

The Tri Track Open Modified Series returns to the track at Star Speedway in New Hampshire on Saturday, May 22. For more information on the Tri Track Open Modified

Series, visit tritrackmodifieds.com and follow the series on social media.

THE FINISH:

1. Sam Rameau
2. Ron Silk
3. Matt Hirschman
4. Chase Dowling
5. Les Hinckley
6. Ben Byrne
7. Woody Pitkat
8. Anthony Nocella
9. Ryan Preece
10. Joey Cipriano III
11. Anthony Sesely
12. Max Zachem
13. Devin O’Connell
14. Joel Monahan
15. Chase Dowling
16. Chris Pasteryak
17. Kurt Vigeant
18. Brian Robie
19. Doug DiPisa
20. Richard Savary
21. Matt Swanson
22. Matt Kimball
23. Kirk Alexander
24. Austin Kochenash
25. Ronnie Williams
26. Glen Reen



Sam Rameau won the Tri Track Open Modified series opener last Saturday afternoon at Monadnock Speedway. *Submitted photo*

Western Mass. Pioneers ready to get back on the pitch

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

LUDLOW – After the 2020 soccer season was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the members of the Western Mass. Pioneers and the New England Mutiny are eager to start playing matches again at historic Lusitano Stadium.

“Everyone has been impacted by the pandemic during the past year,” said Joe Ferrara Jr., the Pioneers first-year General Manager and the Mutiny Managing Director. “The players and coaches from both teams are itching to get back out on the pitch and play some soccer. It should be another exciting season.”

The last time the Pioneers played a match at Lusitano Stadium was a 1-0 shutout victory versus Manhattan SC on July 6, 2019. They then wrapped up the 2019 regular season with a 2-1 win at Manhattan SC the following weekend.

The Pioneers, who finished in first place in the Northeast Division standings with an 11-0-3 mark in 2019, began the USL League Two playoffs by dispatching the North Carolina Fusion U23 squad, 3-1, in the Eastern Conference semifinals at Gurski Stadium in Reading, Pennsylvania. Their outstanding season came to an end twenty-four hours later following a 1-0 loss to Reading United AC in the Conference finals.

The Pioneers are scheduled to return to action for the first time in almost two years by hosting Fall River FC in a friendly at Lusitano Stadium at 7:30 p.m. on Friday night. No Spectators will be allowed to attend the preseason match.

There is a very good chance many of the Pioneers faithful supporters will be able to attend the first home match of

the regular season against the Seacoast United Phantoms on May 21. A new state guideline which goes into effect on May 10, will increase the capacity from 12% to 25% at all indoor and outdoor stadiums in Massachusetts.

“We’re currently working with the Ludlow Board of Health on the situation, but we’re really hoping to welcome our fans back to the stadium at some point this season,” Ferrara said. “We want everyone to feel safe at our matches. I feel like our safety protocols are second to none. Sports have always been an important part of our community.”

All of the Pioneers home matches this season are scheduled to start at 7:30 p.m. Their other six home matches will be against FC Malaga City (June 4), AC Connecticut (June 11), Black Rock FC (June 18), Boston Bolts (June 26), AC Connecticut (July 2), and Black Rock FC (July 9).

For more information about how to purchase tickets online please visit wmpioneers.com.

Federico Molinari, who’s a former Pioneers player, returns as the head coach.

“Federico and his players did a tremendous job winning the conference title in 2019,” Ferrara said. “Federico and I have been working very well together during the offseason. He has a passion for the game of soccer. He also has a lot of international contacts.”

The Pioneers assistant coaches are Dennis Gomes, Jay Willis, and John Voight.

A couple of returning Pioneers players are Guillermo Deal, Blake Mullen, Connor Hicks, and Maxi Viera, who’s the girls’ varsity soccer coach at Ludlow High School.

Viera and Deal were two of the

nine players from Uruguay listed on the Pioneers 2019 roster. There were also players from France, Spain, and Argentina, which is Molinari’s home country.

“We do have a lot of international players on this year’s roster,” Ferrara said. “A couple of the foreign players are members of a college soccer team in the United States. Some of them are looking for professional opportunities.”

Mullen, who’s from Manchester, Connecticut, was the Pioneers starting goalkeeper in 2019. He only allowed seven goals during the regular season and was selected to the All-League team. He also received the USL League Two Golden Glove Award.

Back in 2016, Hicks, who graduated from Monson High School, scored the game winning goal in overtime against Cohasset in the Division 4 state championship match. Hicks is also a member of the AIC men’s soccer team.

The Mutiny played their home matches at several different high school in Western Massachusetts, before moving to Lusitano Stadium in 2019.

“The Mutiny had a great first season at Lusitano Stadium two years ago,” Ferrara said. “We also had great weather for all of our home games, which helped bring even more fans to our games.”

The Mutiny, who celebrated their 20th season in 2019, finished the regular season with an 8-0-2 record.

Just like the Pioneers, the Mutiny finished in first place in the league standings and advanced into the Eastern Conference finals of the United Women’s Soccer league.

After defeating the Long Island Rough Riders, 3-0, at home in the semifinals, the Mutiny’s outstanding season come to an end following a 2-1 loss to

the Lancaster Inferno at the stadium two days later.

Jeb Booth returns as the Mutiny head coach following a very successful first season at the helm.

“Jeb is an outstanding soccer coach, and he loves coaching this team,” Ferrara said. “All of the players respect him.”

Matt Johnson, who coached the AIC women’s soccer team for nine seasons and is the first-year head women’s soccer coach at Franklin Pierce, will be an assistant coach for the Mutiny this season.

While the Pioneers roster is made up of mostly international players, most of the Mutiny players are from Western Massachusetts.

“The talent pool has been rich in this area during the past couple of seasons,” Ferrara said. “We have players from ten different communities in Western Mass.”

A few of the local Mutiny players are Jocelyn Trajkovski (Ludlow), Trystin Burger (Granby), Kayla Henry (Belchertown), Hope Santaniello (Agawam), Laura Gouvin (Monson), Alexis Legowski (South Hadley), Lily Fabian (Monson), Brooke Murphy (Monson), Nissa Pereira (Ludlow) and Ela Kopec (Ludlow).

The Mutiny home opener is scheduled to be against the Scorpions SC, who are a first-year team from the Boston area, on May 15.

Their other home matches, which will all begin at 7 p.m., are against CT Rush (May 22), NJ Copa FC (June 5), Syracuse DA (June 19), and the L.I. Rough Riders (July 10).

If fans are allowed to attend soccer matches at Lusitano Stadium this season, it’ll be a good sign that things are finally getting back to normal again. The home fans also help energize both the Pioneers and Mutiny players.

WRESTLING, from page 7

to the meet. A rule allowing the plus-three at night will not be allowed for the modified season.

Another big part of the wrestling season will be the possibility of competition taking place in the open air. Schools participating in the wrestling season are being encouraged to hold meets outdoors.

There are only a few major match

modifications that have been put in place. There will be frequent sanitization of mats and for participants. Referees will need to stop matches in instances where protective ear guards come off. There will be no handshakes before, and after matches. The referee will also only point to winners instead of raising their hands.

Competitions for all spring sports, including wrestling, were set to start this week.

OLIVEIRA, from page 7

Bill Bathel, who previously was a coach for DiFranco Realty. “Karl was a leader of the league, of a team, of men, women, and children. And above all, a true and sincere friend.”

Tommy Bouvier, a member of his top competition over the past decade PeoplesBank, said Karl was a great part of the league and someone he enjoyed playing against.

“It’s a huge loss for the league and

for the Town of Palmer,” said Bouvier. “He was one of the most committed people I have ever met.”

Oliveira’s life was celebrated earlier this week.

“You are an inspiration to all baseball lovers,” said Brian Hayes. “You live by simple rules, balls and strikes, fair or foul. I loved being your teammate and loved competing against you. For the past 20 years I’ve watched you share your greatness with us. Thank you, and thank you to your family for sharing.”

New England’s largest theme park will open May 14

AGAWAM – Six Flags New England, the Thrill Capital of New England in accordance with the state of Massachusetts’ guidelines will be open with its world-class attractions on Friday, May 14 to Members and Season Pass holders and then to the general public on Saturday, May 15.

“We are beyond thrilled that we can reopen our theme park with a full complement of our more than 100 rides, attractions, and unique experiences,” said Six Flags New England Park President Pete Carmichael. “Now more than ever families need an escape that is safe, accessible, and fun. The thrill is calling and our team is eager to welcome back our Members, Season Pass holders, and guests once again,” added Carmichael.

All guests will need to reserve their visit at sixflags.com/reserve to manage attendance and stagger arrival times. This includes all Members, Season Pass holders and day-ticket holders.

Other safety procedures include:

- State-of-the-art thermal imaging for temperature checks; and
- Advanced security-screening technology for touchless bag checks.

The park’s comprehensive safety plan, which the company developed in consultation with epidemiologists, meets or exceeds federal, state, and local guidelines for sanitization, hygiene, and social distancing protocols.

Health Screenings for Guests and Team Members

- Contactless IR thermal imaging will be used to screen temperatures of guests and employees prior to entry;
- Individuals will be required to acknowledge and abide by the company’s health policies, which prohibit park entry



if guests have recently been exposed to or are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19;

- Following CDC guidelines, all guests over the age of two and all team members will be required to wear face masks covering the nose and mouth throughout their visit/work day.
- Masks will be available for sale at the front gate for any guest without one;

Social Distancing

- Easy to identify distance markers will be added in all park entry, ride, restroom, retail location, and dining queue lines;
- Dining areas will be adjusted to allow ample space between seated parties;
- Guests will be separated by empty rows and/or seats on all roller coasters, rides, and attractions;
- Six-foot viewing areas will be marked for guests to observe game play while adhering to social distancing requirements;
- Advanced security screenings will enable touchless bag checks;
- Guests viewing outdoor entertain-

ment will be separated by at least six feet;

- Capacity at indoor venues and on some attractions, will be reduced to meet social distancing requirements.

Extensive Sanitization and Disinfecting Protocols

- Trained and dedicated cleaning teams have been put in place;
- Rides, restraints, and handrails will be cleaned throughout the day;
- Team members will frequently sanitize and disinfect high-touch points areas,
- Restroom staff will be stationed to disinfect each stall and sink on a frequent basis;
- Multiple hand-washing and alcohol-based hand-sanitizer stations will be located throughout the parks; and
- All team member work areas will be regularly sanitized and disinfected.

Sanitized Food Preparation and Service

- Modified menus will help facilitate touchless transactions;
- Self-service buffets and salad bars will be reconfigured to eliminate guest contact with food; and

- Condiments, self-serve cutlery, and napkins will be provided to guests with their meals as required.

Commercial-Grade Cleaning Equipment and Supplies

- All employees will be issued Team Member Action Packs which include the following items: a safety face mask, safety glasses, and disposable gloves;
- Low pressure backpack sprayers will be utilized for disinfecting large areas;
- Abundant supplies of sanitizers and disinfectants will be available;
- Microfiber cloths will be used to sanitize surfaces; and
- Queue line supplies, fencing, and tents will be in place to promote safe social distancing.

Multi-Layered Guest and Team Member Communication

- Frontline team members will go through extensive COVID-19 training;
- Safety messaging and reminders will be displayed on Six Flags’ website, and in newsletters;
- Distance markers and physical distance indicators will be in place; and
- Informational safety signage will be posted throughout the park.

Six Flags Season Passes and Memberships are currently available. Members can enjoy priority park entry and tremendous discounts of up to 50% on nearly all food and merchandise all season long. Gold Plus, Platinum, Diamond, and Diamond Elite levels are available featuring all the perks of a Season Pass plus other benefits including admission to all Six Flags branded theme and waterparks, preferred parking, and points that can be redeemed for free food, merchandise, and special experiences. Visit the Membership Sales Center or go online to sixflags.com for more information and to sign up today.

The Big E drive-in open to show new releases and classic films

WEST SPRINGFIELD – West Springfield Drive-In, in partnership with Eastern States Exposition, will be opened April 23 on The Big E Fairgrounds. The drive-in will feature two 45’ by 60’ screens and be able to accommodate 300 cars each, in a safe and socially distant family experience. The drive-in, located in the Gate 9 parking area, is authorized to show new release content, once available, as well as special livestream concerts and other events.

The drive-in is open on weekends through the springtime and then seven days per week during the summer season through Labor Day and movies will begin at a time consistent with sunset. Closing for The Big E, scheduled Sept. 17 to Oct. 3, the drive-in will then reopen October through December for holiday themed experiences. Movies will be announced weekly and ticket sales will be available at the time of the announcement. In addition, a full concession stand will also be avail-

able for guests to not only enjoy popcorn, but popular Fair foods such as fried dough, fried Oreos, and cotton candy.

“We are pleased to bring this safe and socially distant family experience to the residents of West Springfield and the surrounding communities,” said EJ Dean, President, FestEvents. “During the global pandemic, we successfully operated several drive-in theaters across the state of Massachusetts and we are grateful our partner, the Eastern States Exposition,

is maximizing the use of the fairground space for the benefit of those in the community.”

“We are delighted to carry on that tradition of safe, family fun and look forward to working with EJ and the FestEvent team,” said Gene Cassidy, Eastern States Exposition President and CEO.

Please visit www.wsdrivein.com for details or connect on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/westspringfield-drivein>.

Foster Care Review Unit seeks volunteers

REGION – Volunteers are needed from Western Massachusetts to help review cases involving children who are placed in the custody of the state.

The Foster Care Review Unit makes decisions regarding children who are placed in foster care for six months or longer, assessing how well their needs are being met and what progress has been made toward establishing them in a permanent living situation. A Volunteer from the

Community is one member of the three-person panels that make these decisions.

Foster Care Reviews typically last 30 to 90 minutes and are being conducted remotely during the pandemic. Volunteers need to be 18 years or older and must participate in pre-service training that is currently being conducted remotely. For an application and further information, please contact Lashanda Stone at Lashanda.Stone@Mass.Gov.

VACCINE, from page 1

wages and can’t afford to give up a couple of hours in order to get vaccinated; to give them those hours with pay, which in the long run will make your business more successful and will allow the community to get together,” said Murphy.

South Hadley Emergency Management/Health Director Sharon Hart was on-hand to witness the open-

ing on April 28; she commended the teamwork that led to the establishment of the regional clinic.

“This is amazing; the efforts they’ve put in to put this clinic together. Not only their efforts; they reached out to their neighbors, and it’s a collaborative effort. They’re our neighbors; they opened their arms, and we’re rolling up our sleeves,” said Hart.

One can schedule an appointment at the regional vaccination site by visiting [Mass.gov/covid-19-vaccine](https://www.mass.gov/covid-19-vaccine).

SOLDIERS, from page 1

Velis (D-Westfield), Senate Chair of the Joint Committee on Veterans and Federal Affairs. “While our Veteran population and their medical needs are changing, the Holyoke Soldiers’ Home’s mission remains the same: to provide care with honor and dignity. This bond bill will ensure that the next generation of residents at the Home receive the care with honor and dignity that they have earned in service to our country.”

In passing the \$400 million bond authorization, Massachusetts is eligible to receive up to 65 per cent in federal reimbursement for the design and construction of a new facility at Holyoke through the Veterans Affairs State Home Construction Grant Program.

“This bill is necessary to ensure that we maximize federal funds for services for our veterans, who we honor every day,” stated Senate President Karen E. Spilka (D-Ashland). “The additional funds in this bill will ensure that we begin to rethink how we deliver care to veterans of every generation across Massachusetts. Ensuring that our veterans are connected to their communities is an important factor in ensuring that their physical and mental health is taken care of, and so I am proud of the steps we have taken to ensure geographic equity and accessibility, especially for our women and LGBTQ veterans, as well as veterans of color.”

The bill must now be reconciled with the version recently passed by the House of Representatives.

SCHOOL, from page 1

asked parents to complete a Return to School Survey by April 30 to gauge the interest for both in-person and remote options. Both campuses also released information for graduation. Dean Campus will hold graduation on Friday, June 4 at 5:30 p.m., with cap and gown day on Saturday, May 22 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. There will be additional events like Class Day and breakfast on June 2, a barbecue and rehearsal on June 3, and a Beautification Day on May 8 to bring together students, faculty, and staff to clear the ground and prepare for the graduation.

North Campus will hold their cap and gown day on Saturday, May 15 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., with Class Day on June 4 holding a breakfast from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. and the ceremony from 10:45 a.m. to 12 noon. Graduation will be on Sunday, June 6 at 1 p.m. but the rehearsal is to be determined and will be announced at a later date. The Holyoke Public Schools will also be announcing the graduate names, valedictorian name and bio, and salutatorian name and bio on Monday, May 24. People can find more information on returning to school and graduation ceremonies on the school website under the April 29 school update at <https://www.hps.holyoke.ma.us>

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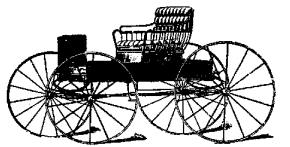
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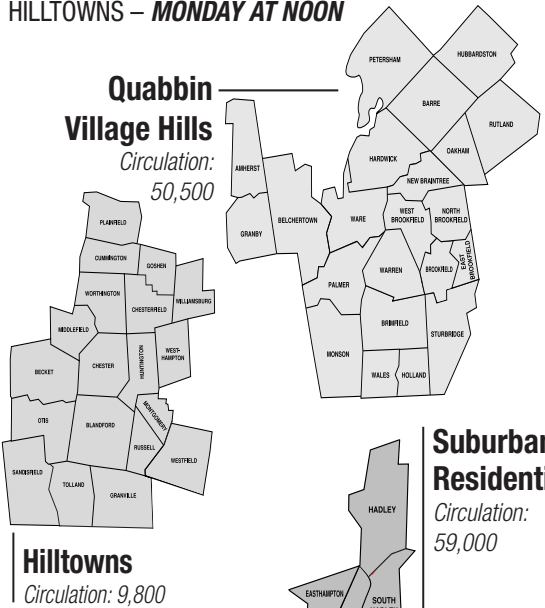


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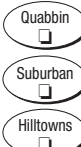
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This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate that is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertising in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain about discrimination call The Department of Housing and Urban Development "HUD" toll-free at 1-800-669-9777. For the N.E. area, call HUD at 617-565-5308. The toll free number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275.

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Invitation to Bid 2021-015
Construction Improvements
Springdale Park Playground
The City of Holyoke is seeking sealed proposals for the construction of playground improvements at Springdale Park.

Bids will be received by the Chief Procurement Officer, Room 15, Holyoke City Hall, Holyoke, MA 01040 until **2:00 PM on 6/3/21** at which time bids will be publicly opened and read.

Documents will be available by email request after 10:00 AM on 5/12/21 at: **peirenr@holyoke.org.**

The City of Holyoke reserves the right to reject any and/or all bids.
05/07/2021

City of Holyoke
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Documents are available by email request at: **belangerl@holyoke.org** and or **colond@holyoke.org.**

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Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
(413)748-7758

Docket No. HD21P0676EA

Estate of:
Virginia L Parsons
Date of Death: 04/19/2017
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION

To all interested persons:
A Petition for **Late and Limited Formal Testacy and/or Appointment** has been filed by **Samantha Parsons** of Springfield, MA requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

IMPORTANT NOTICE
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 05/18/2021.**

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return

day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)

A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

WITNESS, Hon. Barbara M Hyland, First Justice of this Court.

Date: April 20, 2021
Rosemary A Saccomani
Register of Probate
05/07/2021

Notice of Public Hearing
The Ordinance Committee of the Holyoke City Council will hold a public hearing on **Tuesday, May 25, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.** to hear a Special Permit Application of Mass Cannabis Growers Cooperative, LLC for a Marijuana Manufacturing Establishment at 11 Jackson St (027-01-004) for a cultivation facility. Meeting will take place remotely and can be accessed via **www.zoom.us** Meeting ID: 883 4833 1186 Meeting Passcode: 250991 or by call in at 1 (646)558-8656 with the same Meeting ID

and Passcode. Written public comment can be submitted to **publiccomment@holyoke.org.** For information on these applications please contact City Council Admin Asst Jeffery Anderson-Burgos at **anderson-burgosj@holyoke.org** or by phone at **(413) 322-5525**

Ordinance Chair
Rebecca Lisi
05/07, 05/14/2021

Notice of Public Hearing
The Ordinance Committee of the Holyoke City Council will hold a public hearing on **Tuesday, May 25, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.** to hear a Special Permit Application of Green Valley analytics, LLC for a Marijuana Manufacturing Establishment at 306 Race St

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(030-08-013) for a marijuana testing facility. Meeting will take place remotely and can be accessed via **www.zoom.us** Meeting ID: 883 4833 1186 Meeting Passcode: 250991 or by call in at 1 (646)558-8656 with the same Meeting ID and Passcode. Written public comment can be submitted to **publiccomment@holyoke.org.** For information on these applications please contact City Council Admin Asst Jeffery Anderson-Burgos at **anderson-burgosj@holyoke.org** or by phone at **(413) 322-5525**

Ordinance Chair
Rebecca Lisi
05/07, 05/14/2021

City of Holyoke
536 Dwight Street #15

Holyoke, MA 01040-5078
(413)-322-5650

Invitation to Bid 2021-012

Fire Truck Restoration
The City of Holyoke is seeking sealed bids for the restoration of a 1935 Mack Fire Engine.

Bids will be received by the Chief Procurement Officer, Room 15, Holyoke City Hall, Holyoke, MA 01040 until **2:00 PM on 5/27/21** at which time bids will be publicly opened and read.

Documents will be available by email request at: **belangerl@holyoke.org** and or **colond@holyoke.org.**

The City of Holyoke reserves the right to reject any and/or all bids.
05/07/2021

PUBLIC NOTICES ARE NOW ONLINE

- 1 Email all notices to **notices@turley.com**
- 2 Access archives and digital tear sheets by newspaper title.
- 3 Find a quick link to the state of Massachusetts' public notice web site to search all notices in Massachusetts newspapers.

*Public notice deadlines are Mondays at noon,
Fridays noon for Monday holidays.*

visit www.publicnotices.turley.com

Soil Health program encourages soil health adoption

NORTHAMPTON – American Farmland Trust, in partnership with the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources and NOFA/Mass, announced a comprehensive soil health program, incentivizing farmers throughout Massachusetts to adopt regenerative agriculture practices with the goal of improving resilience to climate change and farm viability. The Massachusetts Coordinated Soil Health Program will focus on both organic and conventional farmers to better understand the current resources and practices being utilized. The program will encourage the implementation of cover crops, no-till, nutrient management, and other soil health management practices.

More than 54% of Massachusetts cropland is dedicated to hay or corn for silage (USDA). Meanwhile, vegetables are the second largest crop acreage in the state. Yet, both the vegetable and dairy industries’ established presence has not buffered the economic impact

of declining milk prices and a log jammed supply chain for vegetables and dairy products. With improved production methods and soil health practices, Massachusetts farms can strengthen their financial standing and reduce the risk of climate change impacts, setting them up for greater stability and presence in our local food system.

There are many barriers to implementing comprehensive soil health practices for any type of farm operation, whether they be financial or technical. However, there is considerable interest from farmers who are not currently utilizing cover crops or reduced tillage in learning about the benefits, and how to integrate these practices into their operations. The Massachusetts Coordinated Soil Health Program seeks to provide financial assistance including no-cost soil health assessments, free technical assistance, and on-farm learning events to share information on no-till and cover crop benefits, to influence the likelihood

of adopting these practices.

“AFT is thrilled to help establish a soil health program for the State of Massachusetts that can serve farmers and provide support in their soil health journeys. Better soil health means greater yields, more resilience to climate change impacts, such as extreme weather events, and increased pest pressure. Improved soil health means increased farm viability and land tenure for farmers across the Commonwealth.” Dr. Emily Cole, New England Deputy Director.

The program brings together a solid advisory team of farmers, soil health experts, and agency partners, all of whom provide knowledge and resources on how to best provide the farmers in the Commonwealth with the financial and technical assistance necessary to overcome the many identified barriers. UMass Amherst Stockbridge School of Agriculture will be supporting this work by conducting soil health analysis for farmers interested in understanding more about the state of their soil’s health.

“Soil health is a critical but also advanced area of understanding for both farmers and scientists. Projects like this provide a unique opportunity to not just study the science of soil health, but to actually see how the science holds up on the farm. That’s what we do in the Stockbridge School - we put science to work.” Dr. Masoud Hashemi, Extension Professor, Stockbridge School of Agriculture.

Goals of the project include:

- Identify the barriers to soil health practice adoption through farmer interviews and surveys, and input from service providers.
- Organize soil health focused events for farmers across the state.

The first event in the series, “No-Till Tools for Small Scale Farmers” is put on by NOFA/Mass and will take place at Long Life Farm in Hopkinton, MA on May 16th. Register at nofamass.org/events. Attendance is limited for safety and a video recap will be posted on Youtube following the event. Establish two on-farm soil health demonstration projects to track soil health changes and economic impacts and to serve as real-life examples for other Massachusetts farmers.

- Establish a robust database cataloging soil health status across the Commonwealth across a wide variety of production systems, soil types, and farming practices, helping to inform locally relevant agricultural research.
- Provide farmers with no-cost soil health assessments and technical assistance.
- Share the lessons learned from farmers, soil health evaluations, and project outcomes to generate resources including videos, factsheets, soil health case studies and reports, providing valuable information about soil health, climate resilience, and the economic viability of Massachusetts farms.

Providing farmers with resources to build health soils is crucial in combating climate change and maintaining a robust food system in Massachusetts. To learn more about the project, visit <https://farmland.org/ma-soil-health-program/>

If you, or someone you know, is a farmer in Massachusetts interested in building resilient soil, please take this brief survey to help us gather information on your current soil health practices. Participants who respond before May 31 will be entered to win one of five \$50 gift cards. Survey can be found here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MASoilHealth>.

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12 • MAY 7, 2021 • The Holyoke Sun